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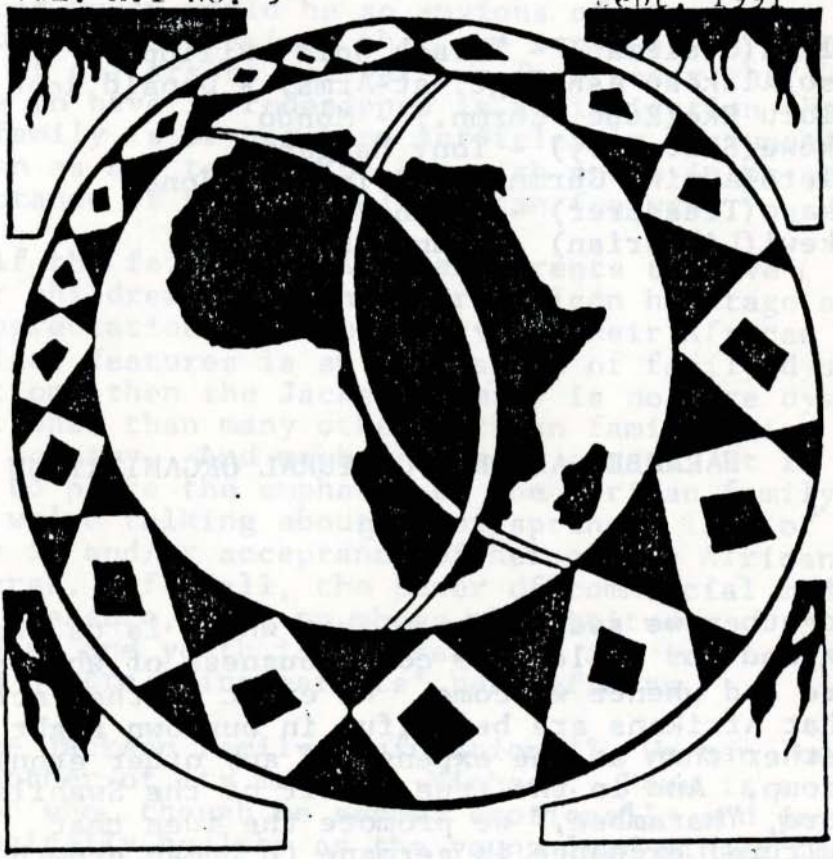

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural exchange is germane to human growth.

EDITORIAL

Is the Jackson family dysfunctional? Was Daddy Jackson abusive to the children? Was he sexually abusive toward one or more of his daughters? We get a clue as to whether the Jackson family is dysfunctional from the surgical mutilation performed on La Toya's face. The fact that a young African woman would be so envious of the facial features of Caucasians that she would spend thousands of dollars to set her own face under the knife to have it redesigned is an indication that her family is or has been sufficiently dysfunctional so as not to provide her with pride in or even acceptance of her natural African features.

But if the failure of African parents to give their children pride in their African heritage and an appreciation for the beauty of their African physical features is an indication of family dysfunction, then the Jackson family is no more dysfunctional than many other African families in this country. And maybe, to some extent, it is unfair to place the emphasis on the African family when we're talking about an offspring's lack of pride in and/or acceptance of her or his African features. Afterall, the power of commercial media peer pressure, etc. to shape the attitudes of children and youth is far-reaching and intense, often neutralizing parents' best efforts.

Is the Jackson family dysfunctional? We can look at another of its members--Michael. Here is a person who, though he seemed emotionally and psychologically healthy as the young lead-singer for the Jackson Five, appears to suffer from a severe identity crisis. He not only doesn't seem to know who he is with respect to continentality(African, European, etc.) but seems not to have a firm grip on his sexuality. Like his sister, La Toya, he has had his face severely mutilated. Unlike his sister, he has exhibited an obsession with the bones of the "elephant man." Is Michael more a product of a dysfunctional family or of an entertainment industry that so molds youthful performers

for commercial success that they eventually become the images that have been made for them?

Was Daddy Jackson abusive to his children? In her book, GROWING UP IN THE JACKSON FAMILY, and in innumerable interviews over the past few weeks, La Toya claims that her father beat the children, was sexually abusive toward herself and one of her sisters, and was otherwise monstrous as a parent. Are her charges true? If they are, to what extent? La Toya tells us that, in writing a book in which she trashes her parents and other family members, she's just trying to get things off her chest, trying to release repressed feelings, trying to help others who have abusive parents and dysfunctional families to deal with their emotional and psychological baggage. Questioned by various interviewers as to whether her book wasn't motivated by a desire on her part to make some big bucks, she insists that she doesn't care about the money, that she just wants to help people by sharing her story.

But La Toya's story is not just her story. It is the story of her parents and siblings. It is essentially a kiss-and-tell story in that it contains the basic elements of kiss-and-tell. A person has a relationship with another person and does something with that other person in confidence and then, later, betrays that confidence. LaToya had a particular kind of relationship with a "person"(her family); "did something"(had certain experiences and observed some things) that was a family affair; and then, in GROWING UP IN THE JACKSON FAMILY; "betrays that confidence" by telling of these private and family matters, maybe adding some imaginative touches, to the public.

If there are outright lies and/or gross exaggerations in La Toya's book, that is ethically reprehensible. If everything in the book is essentially true, the reprehensibility remains intact. What La Toya has done is to serve up her family

on a platter to a hungry public, whose "inquiring minds want to know."

Milton Coleman did it to Jesse Jackson in the infamous "hymie-town" caper; Ralph Abernathy did it to the late Martin Luther King in his AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN. A lot of people, the famous and the wanna-be-famous, are profiteering by hanging the dirty laundry of family and other people with whom they're close or have been out for public view. Sometimes they tell it like it is or was and sometimes they soil the laundry themselves with false dirt. In either case, private agonies and personal problems become public entertainment and bank accounts grow large.

If La Toya was, in fact, abused by her father and if she experienced and witnessed other sordid things in the Jackson household, we must feel for the Sister and have an appreciation for her pain. At the same time, however, we must ask why, if she felt a need to express herself about this pain and the causes of it, she didn't simply sit down and share this, in confidence, with a close friend. If she really felt a need to go public about her own alleged sexual abuse, what does or did she believe gave her the right to expose her older sister, whom she claims to also have been sexually abused by her father, to the perverse speculations of a voyeuring public? Blood is thicker than water but apparently it is not, in many people's minds, thicker than cash.

The matters of parental abuse of children and family dysfunction are not the only issues of importance arising from La Toya's "revelations." There is the issue of loyalty to and respect for family, for friendships, for one's people in general. What we are confronted with is not just the growing popularity of books and public statements that follow the kiss-and-tell formula but a general devaluation of the principle of loyalty, of the principle of respect(for oneself and for others), of the idea of dignity. All of these things in

capitalist and materialist America are expendable. And the fact that this devaluation has become characteristic of Caucasian society doesn't lessen the harm it is doing to African people. The fact that we have contracted the disease of this devaluation from Caucasians and their institutions doesn't lessen our responsibility to take measures to root it out from ourselves. Being African in racist America, we, especially, cannot afford the "luxury" of this madness.

Some weeks ago Amiri Baraka and other African folks presented an open letter to Spike Lee and to organs of the media in which Spike was attacked as some kind of movie-making pawn of the Caucasian-run movie industry and in which his ability to direct a decent film about Malcolm X was seriously questioned. Didn't Amiri Baraka and his fellow signatories have an obligation to do everything possible to address their concerns to Spike privately and in a manner of respect before resorting to the public trashing of this Brother? Or these African males and females who appear on "Love Connection." How is it that they apparently find no fault in demeaning each other for public entertainment? Or African artists in the music field who allow their art and the traditions it represents to be trivialized in idiotic television commercials. How much bank do they think they need?

La Toya is dead on. There is a dysfunctional family. But she can't claim it all to herself.

-Editor

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.), is a pan-Africanist newsletter. The FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any distinctions between African people based solely on place of birth. References in the FLAME to Africans are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter "black" or other terms designating African people. This is our practice because we do not wish to diminish the integrity and authenticity of the articles we excerpt from.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(p.k.a. D. Rice).

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 1200 words, though longer pieces will not be automatically rejected. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. We are looking for poems which address African folks' lives, the conditions we face, and our struggles to rise above those things which hinder us. Submitted poems should not sacrifice power and beauty for the sake of uniform rhythm and/or rhyme. Send submissions to the editor c/o HARAMBEE FLAME; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68542-2500.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Georgia Death Penalty: The Race Factor

"'Race is still the fuel driving the death penalty motor', says Michael Kroll, Director of Death Penalty Information Center(D.P.I.C.), summarizing death penalty statistics for Georgi's Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit. The Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit covers six counties in Western Georgia, and includes Columbus, the state's second largest city.

"The D.P.I.C., reporting recently on death penalty statistics and policies in the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, indicated that district attorneys in the circuit systematically exclude Blacks from juries, so that more than half of the Black men sentenced to death were tried by all-white juries.

"The most insidious facts coming out of the D.P.I.C. report are that Blacks represent 65% of those murdered, compared to 35% for whites. However the district attorney seeks the death penalty when the victim is white 85% of the time, compared to 15% if the victim is Black. In fact if the victim was Black, the district attorney never sought the death penalty if the killer was white. .."

-from "Capital Punishment Georgia Style," page 3 Aug. ARM THE MASSES(N.Y., N.Y.)

More Behind The Crown Heights Explosion

"...Last week, the tinderbox(in Crown Heights, a community cleft by the contrasting fortunes of its predominantly Black and minority Jewish populations) exploded when a car driven by Yosef Lisef, a 22-year-old Hasidic Jew, struck two Black children who were playing on the sidewalk outside their home. Gavin Cato, 7, was pronounced dead at the scen; his cousin Angela, also 7, was hospitalized in critical condition.

"Outraged, Blacks took to the streets for demonstrations that quickly escalated into a riot. Scores were injured and arrested, several businesses were looted, and another was set ablaze. Yankel Rosenbaum, a yeshiva student from Australia, was stabbed to death several blocks away from the scene, allegedly by a gang of Black youths...

"Government officials long have been criticized for allowing the Hasidic community to enjoy a disproportionate share of public funds and other resources while neglecting the needs of the Black community in Crown Heights. For example, of the more than $300 million in government funds allocated over the past 10 years to rehabilitate and construct new housing in the area, the Hasidim are thought to have benefitted disproportionately...

"Green(Assemblyman Roger L.) charged that this practice was aided and abetted by the administration of former Mayor Edward I. Koch, who also was responsible for the deployment of city-owned emergency services outside the Crown Heights headquarters of the Hasidic sect on a full-time basis. Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, the leader of the sect, also has enjoyed a city-supplied police escort for the past 10 years on weekly trips from his home to a cemetery in Queens where his wife and father-in-law are buried...

"If the Black community in Crown Heights suffers because it is Black, it may suffer even more because it is seen to comprise mainly immigrants from the Caribbean. These immigrants have become a sort of 'double minority' because they are regarded as lacking in political clout, according to Dr. Waldaba Stewart, a prominent activist in the Caribbean community who was a New York state senator from 1968 to 1972.

"'In seeking our legitimate rights, we have the added burden of having to overcome the perception that we are not worthy because many of us are not citizens.

"'There is also a perception among many of our elected officials, and even some community leaders, that Caribbean Americans are not a viable political force because some of us are undocumented...'"

-from "Crown Heights: A Study In Contrast," page 5, Aug. 28-Sept. 3 THE CITY SUN(Brooklyn)

African Medics Take Skills To Motherland

"That crew of traveling Black medics from Westchester..., all of them members of the New Rochelle-based International Health Professionals Network(IHPN), will take their mission...to parts of rural French-speaking Cameroon and Mali in western Africa...The 16-member medical team, led by Dr. Susan Stukes of New Rochelle, will leave the U.S. on Sept. 15...

"In an earlier interview, Dr. Stukes, a dentist, said the Cameroon trip would last about two weeks and that the team would treat about 1,000 people.

..."The IHPN medics will take their own supplies and equipment with them on the trip, much of it purchased with money donated this year by New York area residents. Part of the cost of the trip is also being borne by the doctors themselves, said Vernez Kittrell of White Plains, IHPN's director of public relations..."

-from "Black Medics Embark On Mission Of Mercy," page 22, Sept. 7 N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS

Puppets Of South African Settler-Regime

"They(*Weekly Mail*) have confessions from Inkatha youth who became sickened by what they were to do. So these youth ran away from Inkatha and they must now hide so that they are not killed by Inkatha or the security forces. But they told

their story to the *Weekly Mail*. They say that they were recruited from Inkatha to go and receive training. They say that they were taken by night and woke to find themselves in another country. Some say that their descriptions indicate that they were taken to Zaire. These Inkatha youth say that they were trained by blacks who spoke Portuguese and they say they were trained to carry out attacks in cities and against the people. Then they were taken back into northern Natal. They were taken to bases that were run by white men and they continued training until they were given assignments to go and attack buses, trains and what not. People who have spoken to these youth say that the description of the training sounds like they were being trained by forces from RENAMO, the South-African-backed terrorist group in Mozambique that has committed horrible crimes against the people and murdered millions of people ..."

-from "War Stories: Return To South Africa," pages 8-10, Sept. 1 REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

African Appointed In Brazil To Head Secretariat

"...Senator Abdias do Nascimento, lifelong champion for African-Brazilian human rights, was named to head a revolutionary new governmental department specially dedicated to the upliftment and empowerment of Black Brazilians.

"The internationally respected African-Brazilian statesman, scholar and artist was sworn in April as the premier Secretary of the newly-created "Extraordinary Secretariat for the Defense and Promotion of Black Populations" agency.

"At his inauguration ceremony, held at the Guanabara Palace in Rio, the 77-year-old Sen. Nascimento spoke before an audience of top government officials, African VIPs from Ghana and Nigeria and

contingents of his proud 'Afro-Brazilian brothers and sisters'...

"Sen. Nascimento opened his acceptance speech by paying 'homage to our African and African-Brazilian ancestors'...

"He moved on to detail the many goals and objectives of the new secretariat. Number one on the agenda was a curriculum of inclusion in textbooks that will 'free school curricula of negative stereotypes of Africa and Africans, propitiating an educational experience reflecting the true dimensions of the culture, history and civilizations built by African people...

"To further guarantee overdue equality for African Brazilians, Sen. Nascimento said that the Secretariat for the Defense and Promotion of Black Populations will work on programs such as legal assistance for victims of racial discrimination, finding new ways to house a majority Black homeless population and in the wake of widespread killings of Black youth by law officers and others, 'anti-racist programs aimed at improving relations between police and the Black community' ..."

-from "Moves Being Made Towards Empowerment Of Black Brazilians," pages 2 and 41, Sept. 14 N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS

African Economy Stung By External Forces

"...In reviewing the failure of the last five-year plan(by the U.N.) for African recovery, experts said last week that much of the blame belonged to an unfavorable external environment in which African countries were competing at a disadvantage. While the prices of Africa's exports kept falling, the price of imports rose steadily. The fall in commodity prices cost Africa an estimated $50 billion between 1986 and 1990, accord-

ing to a study by the office of the U.N. secretary-general.

"The impact of the continuing crisis has manifested itself in grim food shortages, worsened by high rates of population growth..."

-from "Crisis in Africa Threatens Global Security, U.N. Chief Warns," page 12, Sept. 11-17 THE CITY SUN(Brooklyn, N.Y.)

Caribbean Countries May Choose Federation

"Four Eastern Caribbean countries now preparing for a political unification are thinking about a governmental structure that would be headed by an executive president...

"The would-be federation will comprise Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines...

"The economies of the four Caribbean territories have much in common: Each depends largely on tourism and relies heavily on a dominant export crop. In Grenada, that crop is nutmeg; in the others, it is bananas..."

-from "Winward Islands May Choose Federation, Assembly Says," page 13, Sept. 11-17 THE CITY SUN

This black Creek warrior was probably sketched in Oklahoma where he and his fellow tribesmen settled after being forced to leave Florida.

Negro Abraham (center rear) served as interpreter for the Seminoles in the 1825 negotiations with the government in Washington, D.C. A U. S. Army officer complained Abraham "ruled all the councils and actions of the Indians in the region." From Loren Katz' THE BLACK WEST

HOMECOMING

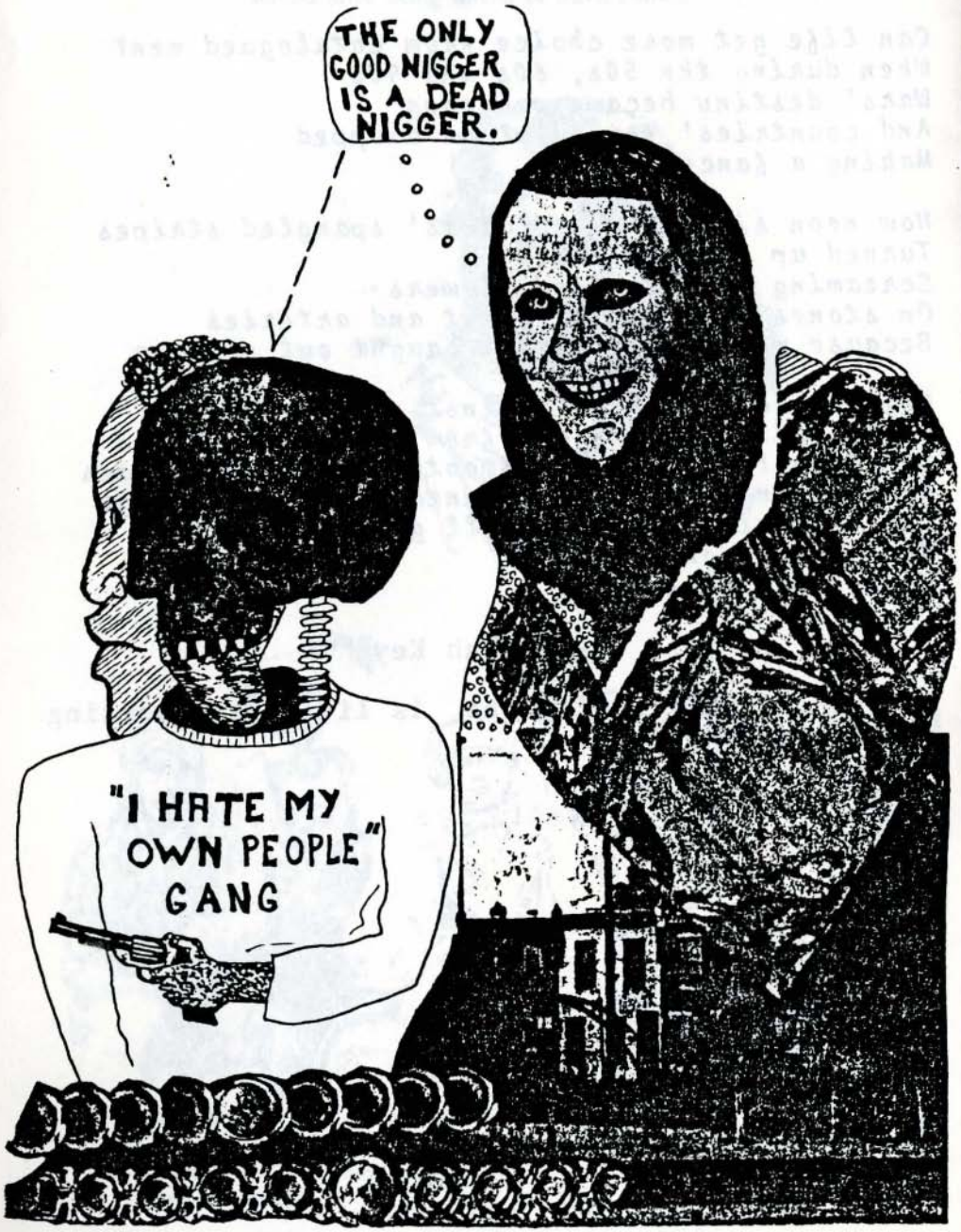
Can life get more choice from catalogued men?
When during the 50s, 60s and 90s
Wars' destiny became our song
And countries' feared blood dropped
Making a fancy pattern

Now neon signs show soldiers' spangled stripes
Turned up against maps
Screaming mud-streaked flowers
On stones stuck in pavement and arteries
Because wilting games got caught out of tune

Cheering crowds mash against silent guns
While spitting lips cry from services dropped
In cloth-lined caskets smoothed over with grass
As swinging porcelain-skinned survivors dredge
The remaining years, if all goes well
Some return ghostlike
To see how they did.

-Heqikah Keys

Heqikah, formerly of Omaha, is living and working in Houston, Texas.


THE ONLY GOOD NIGGER IS A DEAD NIGGER.
"I HATE MY OWN PEOPLE" GANG

BACK IN TIME

On the eve of the American Revolution, according to the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. II, Aaron Lopez "was Newport(Rhode Island)'s leading merchant and her largest taxpayer." He was also leader of the congregation at Touro Synagogue, which he helped build ...

Lopez, a native of Portugal and son of Diego Jose Lopez, arrived in Newport on Oct. 13, 1752 with his wife, daughter and younger brother. A half-brother Moses, had moved to Newport several years before.

In Portugal, Lopez and his family had lived openly as Christians but secretly as Jews. After arriving in America, he and his wife adopted Jewish names and were remarried according to Jewish law.

For several years, Lopez and his father-in-law, Jacob Roderique Rivera, operated various business ventures, including whaling and making and shipping candles made from whale oil. Then, in 1764, he and his father-in-law entered the extremely profitable business of buying and selling human beings.

Within a few years, Lopez owned all or part of more than 30 slave ships. The credit he received from English suppliers in the 1760s and 1770s enabled him to build a trans-Atlantic commercial empire, and his ships journeyed regularly from Newport to Africa, Jamaica, Hispaniola, Surinam, Honduras, Newfoundland, Spain, Holland, England, the Azores and the Canaries...

...a letter Lopez and his father-in-law wrote to the captain of one of the slave ships, Capt. William English, while he was still in Newport

- The following is an excerpt from that letter-

We here enclose you David Mill Esq. of Cape coast Castle's receipt for twenty seven men and thirteen women Slaves, left in his hands by Capt. Briggs

(captain of the *Betsey*, another slave ship owned by Lopez and his father-in-law) *the last voyage on our accounts payable to his or our order, which we have made payable to you; When you have finished the sales of your Cargo, apply to the said Mr. Mill and receive from him the above mentioned slaves, which from his universal character, we are confident he will not only immediately comply but will also deliver you slaves to your satisfaction; To these slaves we desire you'll put some particular mark*(a brand, such as is done to cattle) *that may distinguish them from those of the Cargo, so that their sales in the West Indies may be kept by itself, for the Insurance on these is not blended with the Cargo...*

Source: "Aaron Lopez: Portrait Of A Colonial Slave Trader" by Clinton Cox, pages 9, 10,11,13; Sept. 4-10 THE CITY SUN

California Newsreel released the first collection of award-winning, feature-length African films on video in the U.S. Made available through the Library of African Cinema, the collection includes a program guide, introduction by Alice Walker, scholarly essays on each film, and curricular suggestions. For more information: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth Street/420, San Francisco, CA 94130, (415)621-6196.

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